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ABSTRACT

This document is a folder full of brochures describing the activities of Council of Europe and the European Union to celebrate 2001 as a year of languages in order to celebrate the linguistic diversity of Europe and promote the many opportunities available for lifelong language learning. A number of facts and figures about the languages of Europe are included, focusing almost exclusively on primary national languages of the member countries. (KFT)

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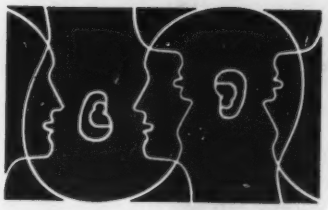

Año Europeo de las Lenguas 2001
Det Europæiske Sprogår 2001
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Los idiomas abren puertas

Sprog åbner døre

Sprachen öffnen Türen

Οι γλώσσες ανοίγουν ορίζοντες

Languages open doors

Les langues ouvrent des voies

Le lingue aprono molte porte

Talen openen deuren

As línguas abrem portas

Kielitaito avaa ovia

Språk öppnar dörrar

INTRODUCTION

We are delighted that the Council of Europe and the European Union have joined forces to organise the European Year of Languages 2001.

Both our institutions are absolutely committed to these two key principles.

First, that the Europe of the future, like that of the past and of the present, will be a Europe of linguistic diversity. That **diversity** is one of Europe's great strengths.

Second, that everyone in Europe should have the **opportunity**, throughout their lifetime, to learn languages. Everybody deserves the chance to benefit from the cultural and economic advantages language skills can bring. Learning languages also helps to develop tolerance and understanding between people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

European Year of Languages 2001

As you can see from the documents in this pack, both the European Union and the Council of Europe are already very active in promoting linguistic diversity and language learning. Both of us will be striving to increase the already significant impact of what we do. The European Year will take place in 2001, but its effects will not end there. By making more and more people aware of the importance of languages, the Year will create a p tform on which we can build in years to come.

Everyone has a role to play in the European Year of Languages 2001. We will do everything we can to make it a success. But by taking part in the Year and telling other people about it, you can make the most important contribution of all.

VIVIANE REDING
European Commissioner
for Education and Culture

WALTER SCHWIMMER
Secretary General of the
Council of Europe

The European Year of Languages 2001 aims to celebrate Europe's linguistic diversity and to promote language learning. The European Year is organised by the European Union and the Council of Europe.

What is the European Year of Languages 2001 ?

What are the main ideas behind the European Year ?

- Language skills give people **opportunities**.
- If you understand someone's language, you can **appreciate** them and their culture better.
- **Everybody** can learn to speak or understand a new language, it is never too late or too early. Language learning is a lifelong process.
- The European Year is about **all languages** used in Europe. Each one is a key part of Europe's cultural heritage and of its future.

The objectives of the European Year are given in full in a European Union Decision and in official documents of the Council of Europe, available via Internet (addresses at end).

What are the advantages of learning languages ?

People who speak several languages can take full advantage of the benefits of living in modern Europe:

- Language skills can help people enjoy travel and make friends.
- Knowledge of languages can mean better job prospects. It is a requirement for many occupations and can mean quicker promotion and higher earnings in many more.
- Language skills are often vital for active participation in regional, national and European democratic processes.
- EU citizens have the right to live and work anywhere in the Union. It is much easier to use this right if you can speak the language of the country or region you want to go to.

What is happening during the European Year?

European Year of Languages activities are mostly aimed at informing people about languages and how to learn them.

Here are just a few of the many things taking place:

From 18-20 February 2001
- A European **opening event** in Lund, Sweden

March/April 2001
- Publication of a short **guide with tips for language learners**

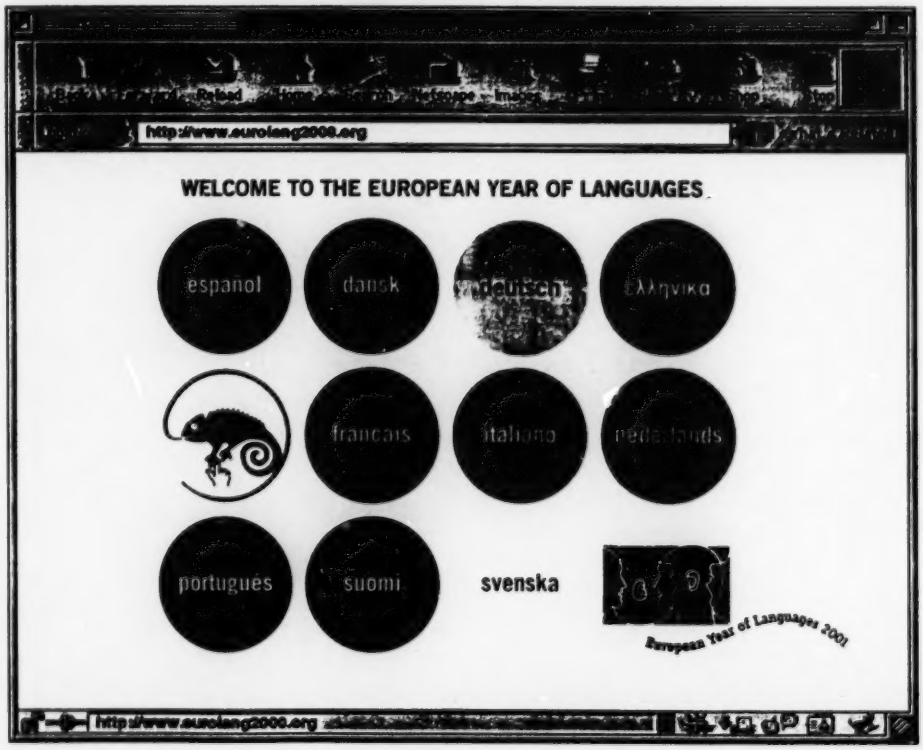
From 5-11 May 2001
- **European Adult Language-Learners' Week**

On 26 September 2001
- **European Day of Languages**

In December 2001
- A European **closing event** in Belgium

Throughout the period from autumn 2000 until the end of 2001:

- A special **website www.eurolang2001.org** with much more information on the European Year, including a detailed calendar. The site also includes enjoyable interactive language activities.
- A Europe-wide **information campaign**, including various publications, material for the press and broadcasters, support from celebrities and the distribution of a range of promotional items.
- A wide range of national, regional and local **exhibitions and events**
- Europe-wide **competitions**



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National, regional and local projects from European Union and European Economic Area (EU + Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) countries may be co-financed by the European Commission. There are two deadlines for submitting applications for funding: 2 October 2000 and 15 February 2001. Forms are available from national coordinating bodies in the countries concerned. Organisers of projects in other countries should contact the Council of Europe for information about other possible support.

Throughout the Year, the Council of Europe and the European Commission are also highlighting their other initiatives to promote language learning. Both institutions have produced material giving further details of their work, available via their Internet sites.

Who can participate and how?

Everyone can participate in the European Year of Languages 2001:

- The first and best way is by **beginning to learn a new foreign language** or improving your existing knowledge!
- Take part in **events and activities** taking place in your country or region.
- Get together with other people nearby or in other countries to **organise your own activities**.
- Join in the **interactive language exercises, games and chats** accessible through the Internet site.
- Enter the special **competitions** being organised.
- **Language teachers and trainers** can use the European Year to help them motivate learners and to tell people about their work and about the importance of learning languages. They can also learn about the work of others in the field.
- **Journalists and broadcasters** can cover activities during the European Year and contribute to the debates inspired by the Year.
- **Political decision makers** can launch and respond to debate on language issues. They can also cooperate across borders, using for example town twinning arrangements.
- **Non-Governmental Organisations** can use the European Year to organise activities and to encourage debate on questions of language learning and policy.
- **Companies and foundations** may support and sponsor activities or simply encourage employees to take part.
- The European Union and Council of Europe are offering the right to reproduce the European Year **logo and slogans**, free of charge and under certain conditions, to all of those who wish to make use of them.

For further details of all of these ways of getting involved, please contact your **national coordinating body** (see below) or look at the special European Year Internet site.

Who are the national coordinating bodies and what do they do ?

All participating countries have chosen **national coordinating bodies** to organise their participation in the European Year:

These national bodies among other things:

- work closely with the **Council of Europe** and the **European Commission**
- provide **information** to the public and answer **enquiries**
- organise **events and activities** on a national and regional scale
- encourage national **media** to cover the European Year

In addition, national bodies in European Union and European Economic Area Member States receive **applications** for co-financing and advise the European Commission on them.

Details of how to contact your national coordinating body are available in a separate document accompanying this one or via the special European Year Internet site.

Useful contacts

Special European Year of Languages 2001
Internet site: www.eurolang2001.org

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http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/languages/index.html

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http://culture.coe.int/AEL2001EYL

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Directorate-General for Education and Culture
European Commission

EUROPEAN YEAR OF LANGUAGES
EU/EEA - National Coordinating Bodies

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EUROPEAN YEAR OF LANGUAGES

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Language learning is something that everyone can do throughout their lifetime - you're never too old or too young to learn a language! Learning a new language is always a challenge, but if approached in the right way, it will be enjoyable and will provide an immense feeling of satisfaction. It will give you a practical skill which can add to appreciation of other cultures, improve employment prospects and make travel more rewarding.

During the European Year of Languages 2001, the European Commission and the Council of Europe will be publishing a Guide for Language Learners. This will include a wide range of practical advice on how to identify the methods and courses most appropriate for you and how to get the maximum benefit from them, in order to learn a language as quickly and as well as possible.

How to learn a foreign language

Ways to learn

In the meantime, here are some basic points:

There are many ways to learn a language. These are just a few of them:

- Use a **self-teaching course:**
  these may include CDs, videotapes or audio-cassettes as well as text books and exercises. You follow the course on your own and assess your progress as you go along. Courses for most languages are available from bookshops and libraries.

- **Television and radio:**
  many broadcasting companies offer language courses on television or radio.

- **Surf the web:**
  there are more and more Internet sites offering lessons in foreign languages, often with sound and pictures.

- **Learn with a teacher:**
  in most parts of Europe there are language classes available for adults, provided by both the public and private sector. Classes often take place in the evening. This way you have friends to encourage you and a teacher to guide you.

- **Learn at work:**
  more and more employers are recognising that foreign language skills are vital to the success of their business. Many companies offer free or subsidised language courses, and/or time off work to follow them.

- **Courses abroad:**
  many language schools and cultural institutes run courses in countries where the language you are learning is spoken.

Of course, you can combine some or all of these methods, or use different methods at different times, depending on your learning style and things such as:

- where you live (e.g. whether there is a language course nearby)
- how much time you have available
- which languages you are interested in
- what your reasons are for wanting to learn a language

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Tips

The main things you need to learn a language are:

Here are some things to bear in mind.

- **Curiosity**: if you have an interest in languages in themselves, including your mother tongue, you'll make a good language learner
- A desire to **communicate**: it doesn't matter if you do not follow every word you hear or read, or if your grammar is not perfect. The essential thing is to understand the gist of what people mean and for them to understand you.

If you've never learned a foreign language before: don't worry! Anyone can do it! But if you have already learned one foreign language, you will have picked up some techniques which you can apply to a new one. Knowledge – even a little - of Latin or ancient Greek can also help.

How fast you learn will depend upon you, but it helps if you can set aside a **regular** time each day or each week to work on your language. In 2-4 hours per week you can quickly make good progress.

But **patience** is important. You can pick up some things very quickly but you cannot learn a language in a few weeks !

Keep a **check on your progress**. Many courses now include tests to help you see what you have learned, and what you need to concentrate on.

Use the **resources** around you. There are many things you can do to reinforce what you learn on a course, such as reading newspapers, listening to foreign radio or watching films in their original language.

Don't be afraid to **try** out your new language. You may be able to meet people nearby who speak the language you're learning, or you may be able to exchange letters or e-mails with someone abroad.

See if you can **visit**, even for few days, a country where the language you are learning is spoken – and whilst you are there use every chance you can to practice.

The most important tip of all: everyone learns in a different way, so try **different approaches** and see which works best for you.

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Addresses

You can find more ideas and advice at:

http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/languages/lang/teaching.html
http://culture.coe.int/AEL2001EYL
http://culture.coe.int/lang
http://culture.coe.int/ecml

For further up-to-date information about the European Year of Languages see the special European Year website at *www.eurolang2001.org*.

Enjoy learning!

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Directorate-General for Education and Culture
European Commission

The European Union's work to promote language learning

The ability to speak foreign languages is crucial to a diverse and prosperous European Union. In many countries it is quite normal for most people to be able to use at least three languages. Such people are better able to move between countries for educational, professional or other reasons. Their skills are attractive to employers. They are well placed to take advantage of European citizenship and of the single market, especially the right to live and work anywhere in the European Union.

The European Commission wants everybody in Europe to share these benefits. In its 1995 White Paper "Teaching and Learning: towards the learning society", it resolved to help all EU citizens become proficient in at least three European languages: their mother tongue plus two more.

With this in mind, the European Union undertakes a wide range of activities to promote language learning. The European Year of Languages 2001 will help further to raise the profile of these.

For further details on any of the activities described below please refer first to the European Commission "Languages" website:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/languages/

to the specific Internet addresses given in the text below or telephone the Commission's helpline on 0800 581591 (UK) or 1 800 553188 (Ireland). The phone numbers for other countries can be found at: http://europa.eu.int/europedirect/. You can also write to: European Commission, 200 rue de la Loi/Wetstraat 200, B-1049 Brussels, Belgium.

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SOCRATES

One of the main objectives of SOCRATES, the European education programme, is to improve knowledge of European languages. With a budget of € 1.850 million from 2000-2006, the programme will be able to build upon its past achievements. Under the first phase of the programme from 1995 to 1999:

- **almost 500,000 students attended universities abroad**
- **10,000 schools worked together in European partnerships**
- **thousands of institutions took part in multinational projects to promote and improve language teaching and learning.**

Languages are covered in all eight sections of the SOCRATES programme, and are specifically targeted under the following:

Lingua : language teaching and learning

- Projects, campaigns, seminars, networks and publications to help motivate people to learn languages, to widen access to language learning and to help educational policy makers to identify best practice.
- Multinational projects to create new tools for language learning and testing and to inform the public better about existing methods and materials.

Comenius : school education

- School partnerships and exchanges: groups of young people from different countries work together on a project, improving their foreign language skills
- Grants helping current and future language teachers to follow a period of training abroad, ranging from a one week course to language assistantships of up to 8 months
- Multinational projects developing training materials and courses for language teachers

Erasmus : higher education

- By enabling students to spend between 3 and 12 months at a university abroad, Erasmus provides an excellent opportunity to develop language skills
- Funding is also available for students to prepare for their Erasmus study period by taking intensive courses in the language(s) of their host country

Grundtvig : adult education

- Grundtvig uses transnational projects, networks and training grants to promote language learning as a key part of adult education.

Further information on SOCRATES, including the Guidelines for Applicants and application forms, is available at:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/socrates.html.

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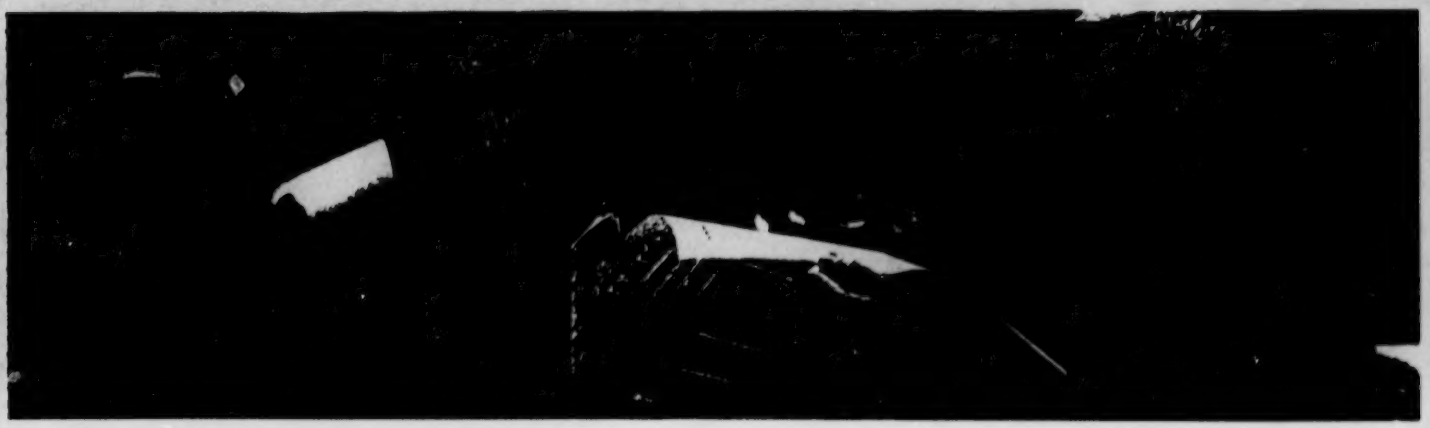

LEONARDO DA VINCI

The LEONARDO DA VINCI vocational training programme, like Socrates, entered a new seven-year phase in January 2000. Foreign language skills are crucial both for people's career prospects and for businesses to be competitive. This puts language teaching and learning at the centre of vocational training.

One of the key measures in the programme supports multinational projects which develop language teaching materials and methods for specific occupations and economic sectors. This includes the use of language audits and of self-tuition.

Language projects are also eligible under other LEONARDO DA VINCI measures and include:

- exchanges of language trainers between businesses and specialised training institutions
- transnational networks providing expertise and information on innovations in vocational language training
- surveys, analyses and identification of best practice in language training
- pilot projects producing materials and methods aimed at solving specific problems in language training.

For further information, please consult the LEONARDO DA VINCI website:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/leonardo_en.html

THE EUROPEAN LABEL

Every year juries in each Member State award the European Label to innovative language learning initiatives that meet criteria agreed at European level. (http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/language/label.html)

REGIONAL AND MINORITY LANGUAGES

The European Commission funds projects to promote and improve the teaching of regional and minority languages and to strengthen cooperation between people who share that aim. These projects may include the development of courses and teaching material, information activities and the organisation of conferences
(http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/langmin.html)

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OTHER PROGRAMMES

There are many other European Union programmes which have an impact on languages and language learning, for example:

MULTILINGUAL INFORMATION SOCIETY

Action to promote linguistic diversity on the Internet and in other digital services, until recently under the Multilingual Information Society programme. This will be further developed under a follow up programme **(http://europa.eu.int/comm/information_society/econtent/index_en.htm)**

CULTURE 2000

The CULTURE 2000 programme, which among many other things supports the translation of literary works by European authors from the latter half of the 20th century **(http://europa.eu.int/comm/culture/culture2000_en.html)**

MEDIA

MEDIA II (MEDIA PLUS from 1 January 2001), which offers subsidies for the dubbing and subtitling of films, television programmes, videos and multimedia products **(http://europa.eu.int/comm/dg10/avpolicy/media/index_en.html)**

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WHAT IS THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE?

The Council of Europe is a political organisation which was founded on 5 May 1949 by ten European countries in order to promote greater unity between its members. It now has 41 member states from throughout Europe and it is based in Strasbourg (France).

The organisation's main aims are to promote democracy, human rights and the rule of law, and to develop common responses to political, social, cultural and legal challenges in its member states. Since 1989 it has integrated most of the countries of central and eastern Europe and it supports them in their efforts to implement and consolidate their political, legal and administrative reforms.

Main Council of Europe website: http://www.coe.int

COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

The Council of Europe and language learning

Why is the Council of Europe concerned with language learning?

The Council of Europe's policy is to assist its member states in taking the necessary measures to help everyone develop at least some degree of communication ability in a number of languages (see the 1998 Recommendation concerning modern languages). The ability to communicate in two or more languages, even at a modest level, offers opportunities for personal mobility, employment, education and access to information. Learning languages also helps to develop tolerance and understanding between people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds. Therefore, the opportunity to learn languages should be made available to all.

Recommendation website:
http://www.coe.int/cm/site2/ref/dynamic/recommendations.asp

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How does the Council of Europe promote language learning?

The Council helps member states to implement new language programmes and encourages innovation in language teaching and teacher training. Its activities in these areas are co-ordinated by two complementary bodies: the Modern Languages Division (MLD), Strasbourg and the European Centre for Modern Languages (ECML), Graz.

The projects co-ordinated by the Modern Languages Division in Strasbourg bring together policy makers and specialists from the 47 European countries (and Canada) which have adopted the European Cultural Convention. They share their experience and expertise and carry out joint activities through conferences, seminars, networks of experts, research projects and publications.

The Council of Europe's work has had a major impact on how languages are taught throughout Europe, even though this may be indirect. If, for example, you have learned a language at school or in adult education it is very likely that your course, textbooks and examinations were based on or influenced by the Council's work.

European Cultural Convention website:
http://culture.coe.int/Infocentre/txt/eng/ecopcon.html

Learners' everyday communication needs

One of the Council's main achievements over the past two decades has been to develop and promote a more practical and motivating approach to language teaching, based on the real-life communication needs of learners. The results of its pioneering work to develop a learner-centred communicative approach are now widely accepted right across Europe and beyond.

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COMMON EUROPEAN FRAMEWORK FOR LANGUAGES

The Council has developed a European system for describing levels of communicative ability – the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: learning, teaching, assessment. This is widely used by course designers, teacher trainers and examination bodies as a basis for planning, teaching and awarding certificates.

Modern Languages Division website:
http://culture.coe.int/lang

EUROPEAN LANGUAGE PORTFOLIO

The Council of Europe has recently devised a European Language Portfolio, in which language learners of all ages and from all backgrounds throughout Europe can keep a record of their language skills and significant cultural experiences of all kinds in a recognised document.

The portfolio is a personal document, held and regularly updated by the learner which contains three sections:

- a passport section, in which language qualifications and skills (formal and informal) can be recorded in an internationally recognisable manner;
- a language and cultural biography section, in which learners can describe their language knowledge and learning experiences in as wide a range of languages as possible;
- a dossier to contain examples of the learner's own work.

Aimed at motivating people to learn languages, both in and out of formal education, the portfolio will also contribute to mobility in Europe, as it will provide a clear record of a person's language skills which could support their job applications, entry into educational establishments etc. The portfolio will be launched during the European Year of Languages 2001. Further information on the portfolio will be available on its forthcoming website. In the meantime, if you require more information see the Modern Languages Division website: http://culture.coe.int/lang or its entry at: http://culture.coe.int/AEL2001EYL

TRAINING, NETWORKING AND INNOVATION

Given the importance of ensuring quality in teacher training and developing innovative approaches to language teaching, the Council of Europe has added an extra dimension to its activities by setting up the European Centre for Modern Languages, Graz, Austria.

The Centre's main aims are to promote good practice in language teaching and learning, and to support networks and research projects for those who are actively involved in developing language learning in the member states. It provides a meeting place for specialists in language teaching, teacher trainers, textbook authors and other professionals working in the area of modern languages.

Since its inauguration in 1994, 28 countries have become members of the Centre and it has organised over 70 workshops for language teaching specialists. Its membership and programme of activities are expanding every year. Themes currently being dealt with include teacher education, the use of communication and information technologies, cross-border co-operation in language learning, learner autonomy, early language learning, and textbook design.

ECML website: http://culture.coe.int/ecml and http://www.ecml.at

MINORITY LANGUAGES

The Council of Europe attaches considerable importance to promoting linguistic diversity in Europe and has assisted member states in developing tools to promote the teaching of almost 30 national and regional languages. In addition, it has adopted the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages in order to protect and promote these languages as a vital aspect of our rich linguistic and cultural heritage.

Charter website: http://www.coe.fr/eng/legaltxt/148e.htm

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Contact for the European Language Portfolio and the European Year of Languages 2001

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http://culture.coe.int/AEL2001EYL

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COUNCIL OF EUROPE
CONSEIL DE L'EUROPE

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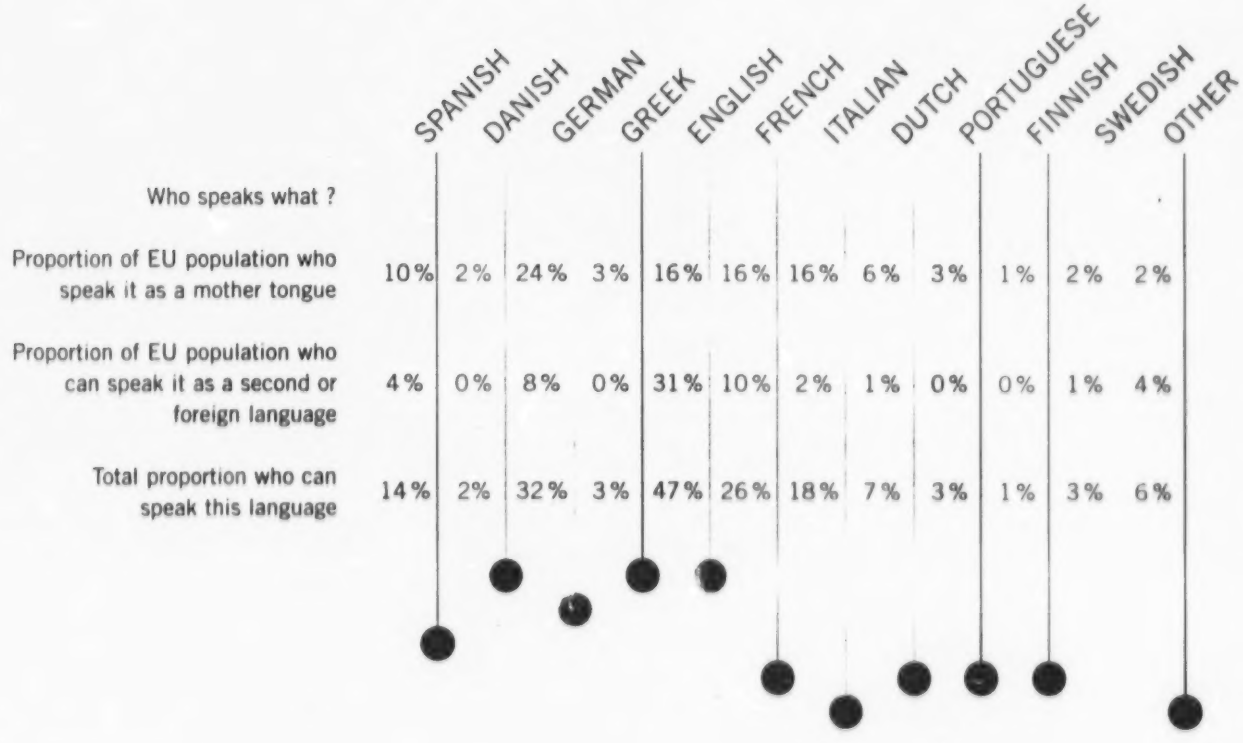
Languages in the European Union

As part of the European Year of Languages, the European Commission is organising a major study of languages in EU Member States and on people's attitudes to languages and language learning. There will also be a separate study on language teaching in European education systems, covering some future Member States of the EU as well as current ones. The results of both should be available via the European Year website **www.eurolang2001.org** in early 2001.

In the meantime, some data covering the official languages of the European Union is already available from previous studies and is summarised here



Who speaks what ?	SPANISH	DANISH	GERMAN	GREEK	ENGLISH	FRENCH	ITALIAN	DUTCH	PORTUGUESE	FINNISH	SWEDISH	OTHER
Proportion of EU population who speak it as a mother tongue	10%	2%	24%	3%	16%	16%	16%	6%	3%	1%	2%	2%
Proportion of EU population who can speak it as a second or foreign language	4%	0%	8%	0%	31%	10%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	4%
Total proportion who can speak this language	14%	2%	32%	3%	47%	26%	18%	7%	3%	1%	3%	6%

Nearly half of Europe is already multilingual

44 % of European citizens can take part in a conversation in a language other than their mother tongue

In **Luxembourg**, nearly everyone speaks more than one language well enough to hold a conversation.

This is also true for more than 8 in 10 people living in the **Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden**.

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There are large variations in language skills between people with different educational experiences.

Socio-demographic group	Proportion who can speak a foreign language
Average for EU 15	**44 %**
By age	
Aged 15-24	62 %
Aged 25-39	52 %
Aged 40-54	39 %
Aged 55 +	31 %
By educational level	
Educated to 20 + years old	70 %
Educated to 16-19	42 %
Educated to 15 or under	20 %
By occupation	
Students	76 %
Managers	69 %
Office workers	56 %
Self employed	48 %
Unemployed	39 %
Manual workers	37 %
House persons	30 %
Retired	28 %
By sex	
Men	46 %
Women	42 %

The most taught languages

Generally, **English** is the first foreign language in education in all EU Member States and **French** is almost always the second. Overall, 91% of pupils learn **English**. 34% of pupils learn **French**, 15% **German** and 10% **Spanish**.

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Fax: + 32 2 299 6321

Internet site:
http://europa.eu.int/comm/education/languages/index.html

Council of Europe / *Conseil de l'Europe*
Modern Languages Division / *Division des langues vivantes*
Directorate of School, Out-of-School and Higher Education
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http://culture.coe.int/AEL2001EYL

La Unión Europea y el Consejo de Europa organizan el Año Europeo de las Lenguas 2001

Det Europæiske Sprogår 2001 tilrettelægges af Den Europæiske Union og Europarådet

Das Europäische Jahr der Sprachen 2001 wird von der Europäischen Union und vom Europarat veranstaltet

Το Ευρωπαϊκό Έτος Γλωσσών 2001 οργανώνται από την Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση και το Συμβούλιο της Ευρώπης

The European Year of Languages 2001 is organised by the European Union and the Council of Europe

L'Année européenne des langues 2001 est organisée par l'Union européenne et le Conseil de l'Europe

L'Anno europeo delle lingue 2001 è organizzato dall'Unione europea e dal Consiglio d'Europa

Het Europees Jaar van de talen 2001 wordt georganiseerd door de Europese Unie en de Raad van Europa

O Ano Europeu das Línguas 2001 é organizado pela União Europeia e pelo Conselho da Europa

Euroopan kielten teemavuoden 2001 järjestävät yhdessä Euroopan unioni ja Euroopan neuvosto

Europeiska året för språk 2001 anordnas av Europeiska unionen och Europarådet

Año Europeo de las Lenguas 2001
Det Europæiske Sprogår 2001
Europäisches Jahr der Sprachen 2001
Ευρωπαϊκό Έτος των γλωσσών 2001
European Year of Languages 2001
Année européenne des langues 2001
Anno europeo delle lingue 2001
Europees Jaar van de talen 2001
Ano Europeu das Línguas 2001
Euroopan kielten teemavuosi 2001
Europeiska året för språk 2001